

Walnut Dollison Historic District  
929 E. Walnut Street  
Cooper-Herman House  
Springfield  
Greene County  
Missouri

HABS No. MO-1252HH

HABS  
MO,  
39-SPRIF,  
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PHOTOGRAPHS

WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

Historic American Buildings Survey  
National Park Service  
Rocky Mountain Regional Office  
Department of the Interior  
P.O. Box 25287  
Denver, Colorado 80225

Historic American Buildings Survey Architectural and Historical Data

929 EAST WALNUT STREET

Cooper-Herman House

Location: Springfield, Greene County, Missouri  
Cadastral grid : SW $\frac{1}{4}$  NE $\frac{1}{4}$ , S24, T29N, R22W  
USGS quadrangle: Springfield Missouri 7 $\frac{1}{2}$ '  
UTM coordinates: 15. 475185.4117655

Present Owner: Jewell Coppage

Present Usage: single family residence

Statement of Significance: Begun by plumbing supplier Harry Cooper, this house was completed in 1899 by tailor Daniel H. Herman. It was sold in 1919 to German clothier Richard Liepman and still remains in the family. One of many substantial town houses built along East Walnut Street at the turn of the century, the building displays an interior spatial arrangement and exterior massing and detailing which distinguish it as Late Victorian in style. The only major addition is the 1926 expansion of the living room; other than this the house is in virtually original condition. It typifies the large frame dwellings built by the upper-middle class in Springfield at the time.

PART I. HISTORICAL INFORMATION

A. Physical History

1. Date of erection: completed in 1899
2. Architect/builder: It is assumed that Harry Cooper, who was also a contractor, at least partially erected the building.
3. Original and subsequent owners: 929 East Walnut Street is sited on a 54.5'x 210' tract of land legally described: beginning at the southeast corner of Lot 5 of Miller's Walnut Street Addition, east 54.5', north 210', west 54.5', south to the beginning. The following references are taken from the abstract for the property, presently held by the Land Clearance for Redevelopment Authority of the City of Springfield Missouri:

1837 Plat Book of Entries, 1 December 1837. United States of America to James Dollison, Northeast quarter of S24, T29N, R22W.

1848 U.S. Land Patent, 1 September 1848; Recorded in Book 326, page 84. United States of America by President James K. Polk to James Dollison. (consideration: Certificate #4-205r).

1865 Warranty Deed, 17 June 1865; Recorded in Book N, page 138. James G. and Florence E. Dollison, James C. and Paulina Franklin, Samuel and Mary E. Gott and Nancy Williams (nee Dollison), heirs-in-law of James Dollison, deceased, to Edwin T. Robberson, "the four undivided one-fifth parts of the north-east quarter of Section 24, Township 29, Range 22, excepting about 58 acres sold by James Dollison during his lifetime." (consideration: \$4000.00).

1865 Deed of Attorney, 5 December 1865; Recorded in Book N, page 358.

929 East Walnut Street  
page 2

- Sample and Emiline Orr by J.R.D. Thompson to Edwin T. Robberson, "the undivided one-fifth part of the north-east quarter of Section 24, Township 29, Range 22, remaining unsold by James Dollison, deceased, and being some 100 acres, more or less, of said tract which was the property of said James Dollison at the time of his death and by decent cost, the said undivided one-fifth part became the property of said Emiline Orr." (consideration: \$1250.00).
- 1866 Warranty Deed, 26 February 1866; Recorded in Book S, page 35. Sample and Emiline Orr, heirs of James Dollison, deceased, to E.T. Robberson, "undivided one-fifth part of the north-east quarter of Section 24, Township 29, Range 22, excepting about 58 acres sold by James Dollison during his life time." (consideration: \$1250.00).
- 1866 Warranty Deed, 15 November 1866; Recorded in Book P, page 152. E.T. and E.L. Robberson to William A. Underhill. (consideration: \$100.00 for 1½ acres).
- 1867 Warranty Deed, 18 July 1867; Recorded in Book 82, page 311. William A. and Pauline E. Underhill to John H. Murphy. (consideration: \$1600.00 for 1½ acres).
- 1887 Warranty Deed, 14 March 1887; Recorded in Book 62, page 566. J.H. and Adah Murphy to George W. Curtis. (consideration: \$2484.00 for 109'x 210' tract).
- 1895 Administrator's Deed, 18 June 1895; Recorded in Book 147, page 453. G.A. McCullum, administrator with the will annexed of J.H. Murphy, deceased, to Sophia B. White. (consideration: \$2250.00 for 109'x 210' tract).
- 1895 Quit Claim Deed, 18 June 1895; Recorded in Book 143, page 117. Elizabeth D. Murphy, Sarepta J. Murphy, Flora Ida Logan, Jno. M. Logan, Angie B. Murphy, Leila M. Murphy and Blanche C. Murphy to Sophia B. White (consideration: \$2250.00 for 109'x 210' tract).
- 1895 Warranty Deed, 18 June 1895; Recorded in Book 139, page 590. Sophia B. White to Harry Cooper, Jr. (consideration: \$1350.00 for 54.5'x 210' tract).
- 1898 Warranty Deed, 15 October 1898; Recorded in Book 171, page 162. Harry Cooper, Jr. and Kate E. Cooper to Nellie Herman. (consideration: \$3000.00).
- 1911 Warranty Deed, 10 May 1911; Recorded in Book 292, page 76. Nellie and D.H. Herman to Lula M. Frates. (consideration: \$7000.00).
- 1919 Warranty Deed, 28 April 1919; Recorded in Book 383, page 556. Lula M. and J.A. Frates to Richard and Rose Liepman. (consideration: \$6500.00).
- 1953 Trust Deed, 23 February 1953; Recorded in Book 964, page 411. Richard and Rose Liepman to Tom Coppage. (consideration: \$1.00).

929 East Walnut Street  
page 3

4. Original plans, construction of the house: The Cooper-herman House has changed little since its construction. A large 2½- story frame building, it is irregularly massed and laid out in late Victorian fashion, with typical, though well proportioned and refined detailing.
5. Alterations and additions: The most significant alteration came in 1926 with the enlargement of the first floor living room approximately 8' southward into the open front porch. This extension changed the outward appearance of the building, reducing the full-width porch to a smaller corner porch and extending the apparent mass of the front of the building, but the effect inside was simply to extend the one space into a larger one. Other alterations have been relatively minor, primarily maintenance related: the original wood shingled roof was covered with asphalt shingles, a small semicircular stained glass window was removed and sold from the west wall of the living room, the rear porch was enclosed ca. 1926 and the two-story garage was constructed ca. 1920.

B. Historical Persons and Events Associated with the House

Located in an upper-middle class neighborhood developed at the turn of the century, the Cooper-Herman House has been occupied by a series of owners belonging to the merchant class - primarily clothiers. Well known in the city through their retail businesses, they were also socially and in some cases politically prominent. They include:

Harry Cooper, Jr.: According to the 1915 Missouri, the Center State: "Harry Cooper is a successful merchant of Springfield, being the owner of the Harry Cooper Supply Company, dealing in plumber's supplies. He was born in Leicestershire, England, September 12, 1861, and is a son of Henry and Mary (Richardson) Cooper, natives of England, who in 1872 located in Springfield, Missouri. The father has practically always followed farming and now lives on land in Greene county, his wife having passed away in 1874. In their family were two sons, the brother of our subject being George Cooper, who died in 1910. He married Miss Grace Smith, who now resides in Springfield, and they became the parents of two daughters, Mary R. and Elizabeth F.

"Harry Cooper attended the public schools of Springfield and at the age of about twenty-one began learning the plumber's trade. Three years later he established himself independently and in partnership with his brother, George Cooper, conducted a thriving plumbing business under the firm name of Cooper Brothers. In 1908, after buying his brother out, Harry Cooper opened a wholesale plumbers' supply store in Springfield and is now engaged in that business. He carries a complete line of goods and enjoys a large trade because he has built up a reputation for honorable dealing."

Cooper was active in Springfield civic affairs, a member of the Springfield Club, the James River Club, the Country Club, the Young Men's Business Club and for three years the Missouri State Militia.

929 East Walnut Street  
page 4

A Mason and a staunch democrat, he was active in his wholesale supply stores in Springfield, Salina Kansas and Tulsa Oklahoma until his death at 81 in 1943.

Daniel H. Herman: Born in Syracuse, New York in 1857, Herman came to Springfield in 1880 and immediately opened a merchant tailoring shop. Again, the 1915 Missouri, the Center State: " He has since been engaged in that line and has added men's furnishings, conducting a prosperous establishment which is largely patronized by the best people of Springfield and vicinity and now incorporated as the Herman Tailoring Company, with Mr. Herman as president. He has many friends, all of whom appreciate him for his admirable qualities of character and his conscientiousness in all business transactions. He enjoys the very best class of trade and that he is up-to-date in every way is demonstrated by the fact that over one hundred of his customers reside in St. Louis."

Like Cooper, Herman was a democrat, a Royal Arch Mason and a member of the Springfield Club. Well known in the city, he was socially prominent and after completing the house that Cooper had begun, lived in it for twelve years until 1911.

Joseph A. Frates: General Superintendant of the Frisco Railroad in Springfield, Frates lived in the house with his wife and three children until 1919.

Richard Liepman: German-born, Liepman came to the United States in 1900 to work for his brother in Mt. Vernon, Missouri. He later moved to Springfield, where he first worked for Jacob Rothschild at the Boston clothing store on South Campbell, and later opened his own shop, the Style on the corner of Campbell and McDaniel. Liepman moved into this house in 1919 and remained there until his death in 1953. Like the Coopers and Hermans, the Liepmans were socially active and well known in the community. Mrs. Liepman died in 1958, leaving the house to her daughter, who owns and occupies it at present.

#### D. Sources of Information

1. Old views: Mrs. Jewell Coppage, Liepman's daughter, has several photographs of the house taken in the 1920s and 1930s. Snapshots of family members in the front lawn or on the sidewalk, they show the front facade before and after the living room addition.
2. Bibliography
  - a. Primary Sources

Coppage, Mrs. Jewell, interview with Clayton Fraser, 15 July 1982.

"Cooper Funeral to be Saturday," Springfield Daily News (obituary), 13 August 1943.

"Harry Cooper is Dead at 81 After Stroke," Springfield Leader and Press, (obituary) 13 August 1943.

929 East Walnut Street  
page 5

"Richard Liepman," Bias (magazine), 21 July 1953, p. 12.

Sanborn Insurance Map, New York, N.Y.: Sanborn Map Company, 1910 and 1933.

Springfield City Directories, 1895-1930, various publishers.

Tax Records: 929 East Walnut Street, Greene County Assessor's Office, Springfield Missouri.

Water Tap Records: 929 East Walnut Street, City Utilities, Springfield Missouri.

b. Secondary Sources

Flanders, Robert, Principal Investigator. "A Cultural Resources Survey of the Proposed University Plaza Project, City of Springfield, Greene County, Missouri: 1981," Southwest Missouri State University Center for Archeological Research, October 1981.

Quick, David. "Historic Inventory," inventory card for 929 East Walnut Street, Missouri Office of Historic Preservation, Jefferson City Missouri, May 1981.

Stevens, Walter B. Missouri, the Center State, 1821-1915, Chicago and St. Louis: the S.J. Clarke Publishing Company, 1915. Volume III, pages 408-409 (D.H. Herman) and Volume IV, pages 625-626 (Harry Cooper).

PART II. ARCHITECTURAL INFORMATION

A. General Statement

1. Architectural character: The Cooper-Herman House, a large 2½-story frame structure, is a notable example of a late nineteenth century Late Victorian urban residence - a handsomely proportioned and detailed building.
2. Condition of fabric: very good. The house has been well maintained throughout its history. To be demolished or moved.

B. Description of Exterior

1. Overall dimensions: Main section: 29'9"x 56'11"  
Rear wing: 10'6"x 8' 3"
2. Foundations: coursed cut stone perimeter walls.
3. Walls: base - sloped and moulded watertable with plain board fascia; body - horizontally placed beveled siding with plain corner boards; cap - fishscale shingles in dormer, cross gable and sleeping porch walls.
4. Structural system: lightweight framing using milled lumber.
5. Porches: The original full-width single-story front porch has been reduced dramatically in size by the expansion of the first floor living

929 East Walnut Street  
page 6

room to a corner porch along the east wall of the building. This porch is finely crafted and proportioned, with tapered square columns on brick pedestals with concrete caps, square balusters and massive, moulded bannister, concrete steps with brick bulkheads, compound moulded roof with projecting cornice and plain frieze and beaded board soffit. Above this porch and the living room extension is a second story balcony, floored with sheet asphalt roofing and rimmed by a wrought iron handrail. Above the front corner porch and the enclosed rear porch are second story sleeping porches, not porches in the true sense, but multi-windowed sleeping chambers used primarily in the summer.

6. Chimneys: Three chimneys - one interior and two exterior side slope - punctuate the roof. All are brick, straight shaft, serving stoves, fireplaces and the furnace. The exterior chimney in the southwest corner is the most embellished of the three, with decoratively corbeled panel, projecting chimney breast and cut stone corbel caps. This chimney is centered above the roof in the gable of a small side dormer, extending barely above the dormer ridge.
7. Openings
  - a. Doorways and doors: Two doorways enter into the building from the front porch: one on the east wall of the living room is a double-leafed entrance, the other, entering into the entry hall is single-leafed.
  - b. Windows: A variety of windows is situated picturesquely along the walls in typical Late Victorian fashion. These include 12/1 double-hung in the front sleeping porch, 12-light vertical pocket windows on the back porch, large 1/1 double-hung centered on the front wall of the living room, flanked by smaller 1/1s, lattice windows in the side dormer, 1-light hoppers in the basement and standard sized 1/1 double-hungs throughout most of the body. The central window in the front corner gable has the most ornate surround, with a massive canopy supported by scrollsawn wood brackets cantilevered from the wall. The remainder of the openings are framed more conventionally with plain board casings and slip sills with either plain heads (second floor) or moulded drip caps (first floor).
8. Roof
  - a. Shape, covering: Typically, the roof is comprised of an asymmetrical assemblage of hips and cross and corner gables. Generally, the main roof is hipped with an offset ridgeline, cross gables on the east and west sides and a corner gable on the south. The rear 2-story porch is covered by a small hip, the front porch by a flat roof which serves as a second-story balcony. All pitched surfaces are covered with asphalt shingles over the original wood and are moderately sloped.
  - b. Cornices: Compound moulded boxed cornices with plain friezes and simply moulded architraves on all horizontal and raking roof edges.
  - c. Dormers: one small gabled dormer on the west slope of the main roof. It is fishscale shingled with twin latticewindows separated by a brick chimney through the center.

929 East Walnut Street  
page 7

C. Description of Interior

1. Floor plan: The house is typically Late Victorian in its irregular first floor layout, with corner stair and rooms leading directly into each other through large openings, and center hall second story layout. The main entrance leads into an entry hall on the north wall of the open front porch; southwest from the entry hall, through a large diagonal cased opening, is the living room in the southwest corner of the building. Behind (north of) this living room is the dining room, entered through paired pocket doors. The kitchen in the northwest corner is separated from the dining room by a small pantry, which is lined with built-in china cabinets. On the east side of the house, beyond the entry hall is the main stair, an impressively scaled and detailed feature, beyond which is a den. Behind the den in the northeast corner of the building is the rear stair to the basement and second floor. At the rear of the building in an enclosed porch is a small rear entry. It is peculiar that a house built by a plumbing contractor would have no bathrooms on the main level, but this house does not, with only a single bathroom on the upper level.

The second floor is made up of a series of bed chambers arranged along a central stairhall. These rooms include a bedroom in the southwest corner, sleeping porch on the southeast, three more bedrooms along the west wall and another sleeping porch above the rear porch on the north. The ancillary spaces are lined along the east wall, including: the main stair in an open upper landing, rear enclosed stair at the rear and the single bathroom. The attic is largely unfinished, with only a small bedroom for the live-in domestic.

2. Interior finish: Interior finishes are relatively restrained, indicative of the late construction date for the building. First floor walls and ceilings are plaster covered with patterned wall-paper. Living and dining room floors feature 1½" strip oak flooring, the entry hall 12" square basketweave parquet, the den carpeting and the kitchen vinyl sheet flooring. The front and rear porches are floored with painted pine tongue-in-groove boards. Window and door trim on the first floor is simple, with plain casings and moulded crowns; baseboards are built-up plain boards with corner round shoes and wall crowns are moulded and coved all around. Decorative brick fireplaces are situated along the west wall of the living room, in the northeast corner of the dining room and on the west wall of the den. This last fireplace is blind, with an ornamental Swedish tile surround and hearth and painted oak mantel. The other two are faced with rusticated brick, with tile hearths and moulded mantels. Second floor trim and finishes are somewhat simpler than the first, featuring papered walls and ceilings, 4" stained pine floorboards, plain board baseboard with quarter round shoe, moulded wall crown in the front rooms and wallpaper border in the rear and beaded board walls in the rear sleeping porch. The bathroom retains its original



929 East Walnut Street  
page 8

nickel-plated fixtures and marble sink with textured 6" square tile floor and claw-footed bathtub.

3. Stairways: The central feature in the house, the main stairway is a free-standing half-turn configuration, rising from the first floor entry hall in a cantilevered bay to the east side of the second floor center hall. It features massive square newels with turned caps, bullnose bottom treads, stained moulded bannisters with closely spaced turned balusters, paneled stringer and sidewalls and a carpet runner. The treads are oak and the rest of the components are pine, either hand grained (newel cap, bannister) or painted white. Narrow enclosed stairs from basement to attic are nested over each other in the northeast corner of the building.
4. Doorways and doors: Interior doorways are plain-framed, with moulded heads and plain casings with no sills. The doors are primarily four-, five- and six-panel with copper mortise passage locksets.
5. Mechanical systems: The building is plumbed and wired for electricity. Heating is through radiators, piped to a central boiler in the basement.

#### D. Description of Site

1. General setting and orientation: The Cooper-Herman House is located in a suburban residential neighborhood characterized by large frame single family residences. Built around 1900 for the merchant class on lots which had been subdivided in the late nineteenth century from several land tracts, these houses are four blocks east of the central business district, suiting them well for their merchant occupants. Although the area retains its overall residential character, many of the individual structures have been compromised through insensitive or deferred maintenance and subdivision into student housing. This house is one of the best-preserved of the early buildings in the neighborhood. The building is surrounded by typical landscaping: grass and ground covers, large deciduous trees and foundation shrubbery. Sited facing south in a mid-block site, it has a concrete driveway along its east lot line. Concrete sidewalks lead from the front and rear porches to the driveway and from the front porch to the main Walnut Street sidewalk.
2. Outbuildings: A 2-story garage is situated in the northeast corner of the site. Built ca. 1920 by Liepman, it replaces an earlier carriage house in the same spot.

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